

**Instant Zombie**  
By  
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**1.Ext. Night.** Fade in on a small graveyard surrounded by a poorly maintained iron fence. There is a wrought iron gate locked with a chain and padlock. Some of the graves are very old with slate stones on which the engraving is so worn down that they can no longer be read but others are of more recent vintage. All of the stones bear the same family name, Horton. There is a full moon that casts deep shadows and a slight mist clings to the earth. The camera holds the shot but pulls back slowly to reveal a large house. A well off family lives here. The place is well appointed, but not showy. The owners have nothing to prove. This is family with old money.

As the shot opens there is a voice over with spooky music. The voice is deep and masculine with a cultured accent.

**Voice Over**

*There are things that people who live ordinary lives in ordinary places and think ordinary thoughts never dream of, but that does not keep them from existing. There are obscure forces in the world that step beyond the merely natural, forces both malign and unholy. Beware little man with your little hopes and little dreams! Beware you unimaginative masses! Demonic forces are afoot!*

Zoom in slowly on an upper storey window. Other windows around are dark, but this one is lit. as we zoom in the window curtains are parted by a breeze to reveal a boy sitting on a bed reading a comic book.

**Voice Over**

*On strange dark nights these forces will on occasion allow that which was once inert again rise and walk the Earth. These are the walking dead! The moving yet unliving servants of the darkest realms! They do not prey upon the corrupt or the wicked, for they are their allies. It is **you**, the innocent they seek!*

**2. Int. Night:Cut to a view over the boy's shoulder.** We can see that the exact text of the narration is a panel caption in the comic book he is reading. The voice is in his own head. The panel depicts a partially decomposed hand thrusting up through the dirt of a grave.

**The Boy**  
*G-g-gosh! Zombies!*

**3. Int. Night: Cut to full body shot of the boy.** He snaps the comic book shut and visibly shudders. There is a rap on the door followed by a voice. The voice is female, cultured, upperclass. The boy's mother.

**Mother**

*Robert! Robert Miles Horton IV! Are you still awake? It's eleven o'clock! Shut off the light and go to sleep!*

**The Boy** (rolling eyes)

*Yes, Mother!*

**Mother** (through door)

*Alright then. Sleep well Dear.*

We hear the mother's footsteps move away from the door and the boy immediately snaps open the comic book again, .

**4. Int. Night:** Close up on comic page. It is open to a colorful full page advertisement. It shows a shining green bottle. On the label is a drawing of a grinning black man wearing a gaudy gold crown and shades. The product logo proclaims Doctor Tousaint's Original Elixir of Animation! There is dense add copy all around the illustration and we hear it as a voice over in a half New Orleans/ half West Indian accent.

About a line into the narration Doctor Tousaint's face dissolves in replacing the view of the add performing the narration in a true hard sell fashion. A full fledged fantasy ensues. He is on a small stage with velvet curtains. There is a table with a neat pyramid stack of bottles and next to it is a stand with a huge leather bound tome that has a gold embossed title on it reading **The Book of Shining Mystery**. Sitting in an easy chair on one side of the stage is a silent, cigar smoking **Baron Samedi**.

**Doctor Tousaint**

*Yes mon amis, this is the original Tousaint's Elixir! Y'all don't want to be fooled by tawdry frauds and adulterated imitations. Be warned and be alert to charlatans who would lead you astray! There is only one, my friends! Only one mystery quintessence will eminentize this astonishing conjuration! This secret formula has been known to the elect for centuries, but now it is offered to the consuming public for the first time and at a bargain price!*

*No longer must someone cease to perform their labors just because the spark of life has gone out! No! The poor widow must suffer when her husband has passed away. Must she suffer twice as much because he passed before he painted the house as he promised? No! Not when you have Doctor Tousaint's Elixir! This amazing substance will return the ability of movement to the deceased so they will do your every bidding! This is the original VooDoo zombie formulation! Why sully your hands with common labor when*

*you can have your very own zombie or team of zombies or **army** of zombies? It's up to you when you have Doctor Tousaint's elixir! For a mere nine dollars and ninety-five cents, you can change your life and the lives of all around you! For a small extra fee I will include the amazing Book of Shining Mystery which contains all the instruction you will need to properly employ this potent preparation.*

**5. Int. Night:** Close up on the boy's face. He has an excited smile.

**The Boy** (under his breath)

*Awesome!*

**6. Int. Morning:** Close up of a shiny porcelain piggy bank. A hammer comes down on it from above and it shatters spewing out a huge amount of money (he's a rich kid, remember?) including large bills lots of change, Maple leaves, Krugerands, stock certificates and what have you.

**7. Int. Morning.** Shot of the kid counting a thick stack of bills.

**The Boy**

*I think I'll order just ten bottles to start.*

**8. Int. Afternoon:** The front foyer of the house looking toward the front door. There is a small table by the wall next to a coat rack and an umbrella stand. On the table is a pile of mail and a package about the dimensions of a six-pack of beer wrapped in plain brown craft paper and tied with twine. A caption briefly appears on the screen.

**Caption**

*Six to eight weeks later*

The door suddenly bursts open and the boy enters at a run. He is wearing a prep school uniform, a crested blazer that is slightly soiled, knee socks and a beanie. The only concession to fad is a pair of very expensive looking sneakers. He shouts out.

**The Boy**

*I'm home!*

His mother calls from another room.

**Mother**

*No need to shout, dear. You're not a savage.*

**The Boy**

*Yes, Mother.*

The package catches his eye.

**The Boy**

*It's here! It's here it's here it's here!*

**9. Int. Afternoon:** Close up of the boy's hands as he impatiently shreds the craft paper from around and opens the flaps of the box. Packed inside are ten corked, square sided green bottles. The corks are sealed with red wax and black ribbon. On top is a mimeographed, saddle-stitched pamphlet with the title **The Book of Shining Mystery**. He pulls out a bottle.

**10. Int. Afternoon:** Quick close up of the bottle showing the colorful, but poorly printed label **DOCTOR TOUSAINT'S ORIGINAL ELIXIR OF ANIMATION!**.

**The Boy** (off camera)

*Awesome!*

**11. Int. Afternoon:** Close up of the boy's face.

**The Boy**

*I'll have to wait until tonight to try it out!*

**12. Cut to-Int. Night.** The boy is reading the Book of Shining Mystery in his bedroom. We can see that he has it googled on his computer.

**13. Cut to a shot of the computer screen.** We see the Google page. The top hit shows the Wikipedia page for the Book of Shining Mystery. The cursor moves to it and clicks and the Wikipedia page appears. We can read only the first few lines of the article before the camera cuts away but those lines are as follows:

*The so-called Book of Shining Mystery is a text that is reputed to have been originally written by the medieval alchemist Ravinius Magnus and it concerns the animation of the inanimate. Ravinius, it is said in legend, once*

*made a golem of stone and this book contained the knowledge needed to do so. In modern times, a text purporting to be the original book has become sacred to certain obscure sects of the Voodoo religion.*

**Pan to: The actual book-Zoom to the open page:**

*“The powers of the bodies of the dead are equal to how little time has eroded them.”*

**14. Cut to:** The family graveyard. It is late night. The full moon is just over the horizon and very bright. A light mist fills the air and an owl calls in the distance. Bats flutter overhead catching mosquitoes and squeaking occasionally. It is the very epitome of a spooky night in a graveyard.

The boy is standing in front of a grave with a bottle clutched in his hand.

**15. Cut to:** A close up of the headstone. It reads “Mathilda Lyons Horton 1924-1999 Beloved by all”

**16. Cut to:** Close up of the boy looking thoughtful.

**The Boy** (voiceover: thinking)

*I don't want my first zombie to be too strong. Great Auntie 'Til died when I was little. There shouldn't be too much muscle left on her.*

**17. Long shot of the boy kneeling on the grave and working the cork out of the bottle.**

**18. Close up of the boy's hand with the bottle in it.** He is carefully dripping a single drop onto the grave.

**19. Medium long shot.** The boy quickly gets up and steps back from the grave.

**20. Medium shot of the grave from the front looking toward the headstone.** Hold the shot for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 seconds. The sod atop the grave bows upward slightly.

**21. Cut back to boy's face medium close up.** He has a look of rapt anticipation.

**22. Cut back to grave.** A crack appears in the sod and it pushes up higher. The crack spreads.

**23. Cut back to boy.** Somewhat tighter close up. His eyes have gotten very large.

**24. Cut back to the grave.** The sod has broken wide open and loose soil is churning within.

**25. Cut back to the boy.** Very tight close up. His face fills the entire frame with his chin and the top of his head cut off. His mouth is open in fear and wonder at the same time.

**26. Cut back to the grave as a pair of arms emerge through the soil and place their hands on the grass.** They are almost entirely bones with only a tight leathery coating of brown and moldy skin clinging to them. They push and haul the rest of the body out of the hole. It is a horrible sight. Within seconds a real live (dead?) zombie is standing on the grave. It clearly once was an old lady, but there isn't much left. Her head is an eyeless skull with tight shrunken skin clinging to it. She is wearing an auburn wig, but it is askew with a messy tuft of sparse white hair protruding from beneath. Her lips are pulled *way* back from her teeth which are clearly revealed to be a set of dentures. Her body, which is mostly just a skeleton, is draped in the soiled remains of a once fashionable dress. She wears a single shoe, the other one was lost somewhere getting out of the grave and the stocking is bunched up around her ankle. As it stands there, one of the hands just drops off and lands on the churned soil at its feet.

**27. Cut back to the boy.** Three quarters shot.

**The Boy** (highly nervous)

*Hi Auntie 'Til!*

**28. Cut to two shot of the boy and the zombie.** It takes a dragging step forward. Somehow it makes air flow over its dry and stiff vocal chords. The sound is a strangled, creaking moan.

**Zombie Auntie 'Til**

*..b..brains?*

**29. Cut back to the boy.** He looks confused. He pulls out the pamphlet and a flashlight and starts flipping pages.

**30. Close on a page of the book illuminated in a circle of light from the flashlight.** The following words are narrated in the same West Indian/Cajun voice as before:

*“You must take command of the undead. Their normal desire is to feast upon the brains of the living and if the practitioner does not take them in hand, that is exactly what they shall do!”*

**31. Cut to the boy looking up from the pamphlet.**

**The Boy**

*Um, no brains for you Auntie 'Til. I need you to do something for me.*

The kid stops for a second biting his lip. He hasn't thought of what he would want a zombie to do for him. He looks over at a tree.

**The Boy**

*I got a Frisbee stuck in that tree a month ago. Go get it for me.*

**32. Cut to: a full length shot of the zombie.** It hesitates for just a second and then starts to turn first flexing at the waste. There is a snapping sound and the zombie suddenly folds and breaks in half. Both pieces collapse. The upper half flails its arms for a second or two before accidentally knocking its own head off.

**33. Cut back to the boy who looks disgusted.**

**The Boy (V.O.-thinking)**

*O.k., I guess they have to be a little fresher than her.*

**34. Int. Morning.** The family is at the breakfast table. The boy's father, Robert Miles Horton III, is sitting at the head of the table Reading the Wall Street Journal. His Mother, Elizabeth Horton is just pouring cream into her coffee while a black maid (**Antoinette**) is placing a platter of eggs and bacon on the table. The phone rings and the maid runs to answer it. She returns in a couple of seconds and whispers in the mother's ear. Mother blanches slightly and speaks to her husband.

**Mother**

*Robert, darling! Something awful has happened!*

**35. Close on father.** He lowers the paper and folds it.

**Father**

*What ever is the matter, dear?*

**36. Close on Mother.**

**Mother**

*Last night someone desecrated your aunt Mathilda's grave. They dug up her body and strewed it in pieces around the family plot!*

**37. Close on Father.** He is truly taken aback.

**Father**

*Aintie 'Til? Why? (he pauses a beat) They must have been after her jewelry!*

**38. Close on Mother.** Shaking her head.

**Mother**

*No. It was all still there but scattered. Maybe it was wild animals!*

**39. Shot of the whole table.** The boy is sitting facing the camera. He is trying to conceal his nervous guilt. The two parents are seen in profile on either side.

**Father**

*Don't be ridiculous. It was probably drunk teenagers. (shaking his head sadly) Sweet old Auntie 'Til. I suppose I had better get it taken care of.*

He gets up from the table and leaves the room.

**Mother**

*What kind of person would do such an awful thing?!?*

The boy sits there trying to look as innocent as possible. **Fade out**

**40. Fade in on the graveyard at night again.** The boy stands in front of a different grave.

**41. Close up on the headstone.** It reads "Robert Miles Horton Jr. 1939-2006, A paragon of family and of business"

**42. Close up of the boy.** He is smiling slightly.

**The Boy**

*I miss you grandpa. It sure would be nice to play with you again.*

**43. Long shot of the boy kneeling on the grave and pouring out a drop of the elixir.** He steps back and the ground moves and then a living corpse erupts from the grave.



**44. Full body shot of the zombie as it stands on the grave.** This one is in far better condition than the previous one. He has full flesh and eyes although the eyes have gone white like boiled eggs and his skin has patches of mossy mold. His face is somewhat flat on one side. He is wearing an expensive looking suit that is slightly dirty but otherwise in good condition.

**45. Two shot of the boy and his zombie.** The boy is tapping his head trying to think.

**The Boy**

*Hi Grandpa!*

**Grandpa Zombie**

*...brains...*

**The Boy**

*Brains later, Grandpa. I need you to hide out until tomorrow. I have a job for you at school.*

**Dissolve to...**

**46. Int. Morning:** Huntington Academy, a ritzy prep school. The office of the headmaster. We see him from the position someone sitting in the chair opposite him would. There is a name plate on his desk identifying him as J. Clayton Fuddy, Headmaster. He is a buttoned up, fussy looking man of about fifty with a bow tie and a brown suit. It looks expensive, but perhaps a decade out of fashion. He does not wear a wedding ring. We don't know for sure that he lives as a confirmed bachelor with his elderly mother, but he certainly looks like the type who would. He speaks with an uppercrust New England accent.

**Headmaster Fuddy**

*I'm so glad that you could come and confer with me Mister Horton. I have become quite concerned with your grandson's performance in several of his classes!*

**47. Reverse on the opposite side of the desk where we see the boy in one chair and Grandpa Zombie in the other.** Grandpa Zombie is wearing dark glasses and the dirt has been brushed off of his suit. His face is still squashed and moldy though.

**The Boy**

*I'm sorry my dad was busy, but Grandpa was happy to come along.*

**48. Reverse on Fuddy.**

**Headmaster Fuddy**

*Yes, well, I am sure that your grandfather is as concerned for your education as your father is.*

**49. Reverse on the boy and Grandpa Zombie.** The zombie stirs slightly from its immobility and gives a slight grunt.

**50. Reverse on Fuddy.** He nods his head in approval.

**Headmaster Fuddy**

*Oh yes, Mister Horton, I understand that you wish to take a firm hand, but punishments and restrictions alone will not get us to the root of the problem.*

**51. Reverse on Grandpa Zombie.** The zombie fidgets slightly and then speaks a harsh dry croak.

**Grandpa Zombie**

*...brains...*

**52. Reverse on Fuddy.** He reaches up and grasps the air dramatically.

**Headmaster Fuddy**

*Yes! Yes, Mister Horton, I believe you have hit the nail on its very head! You grandson is quite bright and has so much potential, so there is no excuse for him performing as poorly as he is! I can see that you comprehend this quite clearly. It is such a rare pleasure for me to confer with a family member who so clearly **gets** it! So what shall we do to help your grandson turn this around?*

**53. Reverse on Grandpa Zombie and the boy.**

**The Boy**

*Hey, I'm smart. I can do better.*

**Grandpa Zombie**

*...brains!*

**54. Reverse on Fuddy.** He presses his palm to his heart and looks inspired.

**Fuddy**

*You, Mister Horton, are an inspiration! So wise! Listen to him, Robert. Listen to your grandfather for he has wisdom as deep as it is wide! It is not enough to merely be smart, no! You must harness that energy! You must use your brains! Mister Horton, you obviously have the situation well in hand, I shall fritter away not another minute of your time!*

**55. Cut to: Int. Evening:** The basement of the Horton house. The boy is down there with Grandpa Zombie next to an old armoire. He is holding open the door.

**The Boy**

*Go ahead, get in, Grandpa.*

**Grandpa Zombie**

*... ... brains?*

**The Boy**

*No! I don't have any brains for you. Get in the wardrobe!*

**Grandpa Zombie**

*Brains!*

**The Boy**

*No! Get in! No one in the house can see you!*

The zombie gets into the armoire and the boy shuts the door. From inside comes a muffled croak.

**Grandpa Zombie**

*...brainzzzz....*

### **The Boy**

*Be quiet!*

He turns and walks out of frame.

**56. Cut to:** Profile of a basement staircase. From the left we see the boy come running up. Just as he does, a pair of legs steps down from the right. The feet are wearing dark uniform shoes, the ankles in support hose. The boy stops and looks upward.

**57. Cut to:** Panning from bottom to top we are looking upward at a middle aged black woman in a maid's uniform. The camera pans upward revealing thick ankles, thick waist, huge bosom and an impatient stare. To the boy she looks like a vengeful goddess. It is Antoinette. When she speaks, she has a pronounced West Indian accent.

### **Antoinette**

*What are you doing here? You will get filthy. This is no place for a little boy! You should not be playing down here. What have you been up to?*

**58. Cut to:** A two shot of the boy and Antoinette.

### **The Boy**

*Nothing!*

**59. Cut to:** Antoinette. She has a knowing smirk on her face.

### **Antoinette**

*Oh my goodness! When a little boy says he is up to nothing it always means he is up to **something!** Let me see what you have done.*

She starts down the stairs. The boy turns and goes after her.

**60. Cut to:** The maid crossing in front of the armoire. The boy runs into the frame right behind her. He crosses in front and stops facing her.

### **The Boy**

*Seriously Antoinette, nothing is going on!*

At that moment, a croaking, muffled voice is heard from the armoire.

**Voice of Grandpa Zombie**

*...brains...*

**Antoinette**

*What was that?*

**The Boy**

*What was what?*

**Antoinette**

*Do not mess with me, boy. Why do all rich people think the help are stupid?*

The armoire rattles slightly and again we hear a muffled voice.

**61. Cut To:** Close up of closed armoire doors.

**Voice of Grandpa Zombie**

*...brains...*

**62. Cut to:** Two shot of the boy and Antoinette. She reaches for the door handle of the armoire. The boy is freaking out, he panics and blurts out:

**The Boy**

*I was playing hide and seek with Grandpa!*

**63. Cut to:** Close up of Antoinette. She looks *very* skeptical.

**64. Cut to:** Close up of her hand reaching for the door handle and opening the armoire.

**65. Cut to:** Medium shot of the armoire with the door open and Antoinette looking in. Grandpa Zombie looks back at her.

**Grandpa Zombie**

*Brains!*

**66. Cut to:** Two shot of the boy and Antoinette.

**The Boy**

*You see? It's just Grandpa!*

**67. Cut To:** Close up of Antoinette. She is furious.

**Antoinette**

*Do you think I was born yesterday boy? That is not your grandfather! **That** is a zombie!*

**68. Cut to:** Two shot of the boy and Antoinette.

**The Boy** (unconvincingly)

*What? What the heck is a zombie?*

**Antoinette**

*You aren't fooling me for a second, child. Wait until I tell your father about this!*

The boy points at Antoinette and cries out:

**The Boy** (in a panic)

*Hey Grandpa! You can have **her** brains!*

**69. Cut to:** Antoinette in front of the armoire. Grandpa Zombie jerkily reaches out for her. She slaps his hand away in disgust. She snaps at Grandpa Zombie:

**Antoinette**

*No, you cannot have my brains! You sit there and be quiet!*

**Grandpa Zombie** (dejectedly)

*..Brains...*

**Antoinette** (to the boy)

*How did you do this?*

The boy sullenly opens the other door of the armoire and pulls out the bottle and shows it to Antoinette.

**70. Single shot of Antoinette.** Her eyes go wide and the her expression becomes hard.

**Antoinette**

*Guillame Tousaint! I should have known! I'll bet he's advertising in comic book again,  
Isn't he?*

**71. Cut To:** The boy. He gives a guilty half nod.

**72. Back on Antoinette.**

**Antoinette**

You should not be messing with this! Is this the only bottle?

**73. Back on the boy.** He nods his head, but anyone could tell he was lying.

**74. Back on Antoinette.** She's not buying it for a second.

**Antoinette**

*Don't you lie to me! How many bottles?*

**75. Back on the boy.**

**The Boy** (quietly)

*...ten..*

**76. Back on Antionette.**

**Antoinette**

*And do you have the Book?*

**77. Back on the boy.**

**The Boy**

*...yes...*

**78. Back on Antoinette.**

**Antoinette**

*Give them all to me.*

**79. Two shot of the boy and Antoinette with Grandpa Zombie still crouching in the armoire.**

**The Boy**

*Hey! That stuff cost me like a hundred dollars!*

**Antoinette**

*I am sure your father would be happy to reimburse you when I explain it all to him.*

**The Boy (panic)**

*No! Don't worry about the money! What's a hundred dollars? Nothing!*

He starts digging through the armoire pulling out bottle after bottle and putting them on the floor.

**80. Cut to: Antoinette points at Grandpa Zombie.**

**Antoinette**

*And you, Get into the furnace!*

**81. Cut to: The boy.**

**The Boy (appalled)**

*Antoinette! That's awful!*

**82. Cut to: Antoinette as he herds the zombie out of frame.**

**Antoinette**

*Shut up, boy. He's already dead, it is just time to cremate him now.*

**Grandpa Zombie**

Brains?



From out of frame we hear a steel furnace door slam and crackling fire.

**83. Cut to.** The boy pouting.

**The Boy**

*Aw shucks!*

**84. Cut to: Int. Day.** A bath room. Antoinette is uncorking bottle after bottle and pouring it into the toilet. As she flushes:

**85. Dissolve to: a view of the lawn.** Before our eyes it become a cut away view of what lies beneath, a layer of grass, then soil. Buried in the soil is a septic tank and as we see it a flush of green tinted water washes into it. The shot pans right to reveal a crack in the tank from which a greenish ichor spreads. Panning further right we see above ground the family plot and below ground cut away views of multiple coffins each containing a corpse in varying states of decay. The green spreads toward them. A caption comes up.

**Caption**

*UH-OH!*

Fade to black. Roll credits

